

Alton Rotary Club: 50 Years  
1921 - 1971

**Alton Rotary Club  
50 Years  
1921 - 1971**

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# ALTON ROTARY CLUB

1921



1971

## 50 YEARS



SERVICE ABOVE SELF



*This certifies that the Rotary Club of*  
**Alton, Illinois**

*having been duly organized and having agreed,  
through its officers and members, to be bound by the  
Constitution and By-laws of Rotary International  
which agreement is evidenced by the acceptance of  
this certificate, is now a duly admitted member of*

*Rotary International*  
**Club No 851**

*and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of  
such membership.*

*In witness whereof the seal of Rotary  
International is hereto affixed and the signatures of  
its officers, duly authorized, are subscribed hereto this*  
*first day of March, Anno Domini 1921.*

*This is a duplicate charter issued 5 October, 1945.*

*President Rotary International*

*Secretary Rotary International*



## 50 YEARS OF ROTARY

If, as figures on the calendar prove beyond a doubt, the Alton Rotary Club is 50 years old, come March 1, in what manner shall a history of its experiences be composed?

Perhaps, at this state of maturity, it is more revealing to review the first two decades, since the last three are fairly fresh in the minds of present-day members. This familiarity does not necessarily breed contempt, but the events of the '20's and '30's may serve as a background and research for the question of origin.

It has the added virtue, for this historia, of presenting opportunity for recollection which only the senior member of the club, Martin Bristow, can dispute with regard to accuracy — and he's too chivalrous to exercise this right. This virtue may be counteracted by the necessity to include first-person references, for which there is regret, but no apology.

### Civic Leadership

Browsing through the only records available, those of the last 30 years, one finds accounts of directors' meetings in which civic undertakings were given support from the club: The survey of historic buildings; Promotion of the West Junior High School Stadium; Establishment of the short-lived City Manager Municipal Government; McAdams River Road; The Belt Highway; Obstetrics in the Wood River Club which gave the district, Governor Art Hunter, and the Bethalto Club; Campaign and election of Ed Brown and Governor; Football tribute dinners to the Alton teams; Ladies' night for beaming Rotary Anns gay in flowery corsages and alluring perfumery; Great fiscal concern over honoraria for speakers; Records lack readability, as do most minute books.

Perhaps most impressive is the record of budgets of \$1600 a year in the depression '30's contrasted with the current

reckoning for 1970, of \$5192 Revenues and \$6158 Disbursements; which parallels current methods of financing among families, businesses and governments. Principal problems were those of members delinquent in attendance.

So, let's go back to the first 20 years, for which the only reliable document available is a copy of the charter, dated March 1, 1921, signed by the most famous international secretary, Chesley R. Perry: and an account of the formation Feb. 23, 1905, of the first Rotary Club in Chicago by Paul P. Harris.

### Organized in 1921

Bill Reavis, Superintendent of Schools, who had ramrodded the organization of the Alton Club was its first president and Albro Giberson secretary. There were 26 charter members, among whom were the leaders of the industries, professions and businesses of the community. They were delighted with the new idea of calling one another by their first names; lifting raucous voices in songs where volume obscured the lack of harmony; exchanging accounts of the vagaries of their occupations, and being required to stand up in front of their contemporaries and make speeches; the principle that the occupation of the lowly shoemaker was equal in dignity to that of the banker from whom he borrowed funds to buy leather for half-soles, so long as each rendered an honorable service to his customer; and both buyer and seller benefitted by their transactions.

### Lesson Learned

Early they learned the folly of trying to be a Lady Bountiful. The river front was an unsightly landscape with squatters' shanties, fish markets, rambling boat docks . . . this of course, before the locks and dam were built. Someone proposed that this be alleviated by dredging sand over the clay banks to improve appearances; someone let a contract; and later the members of the club were billed for \$25 each, much to their dismay, because there was no one else to pay the bill. Dollars were hard to come



by, in those days, and it cured the club of taking on great undertakings for many a year.

No collections of funds, however worthy the purpose, were allowed; nor membership based on political occupations — two principles which were later abandoned.

When the club reached the adult age of 25 years, the occasion was observed with fitting ceremony, and a list of the names of former members, 184 in number, was compiled. Paraphrasing the Ziegfield Follies' motto "through the portals of Rotary" had marched the humble merchant, the top industrialist, names that built towns . . . Milnor, Lafe, Young, Rodgers, Mathews, Beall, Blaske, Corbett, Duncan, Ferguson, Hayes, Levis, Luer, Manbeck, Mulroy, Olin, Sparks, Watkins, Wessel.

Educators marched there, too, school superintendents, presidents of Monticello, Shurtleff, and Western Military Academy, and most of them served as president of the club at one time or another . . . which the industrialists did not. Sons followed them into membership in the club.

### Roll-Back of Years

Recollections of occurrences which are clear even after the passage of so many years, seem worth reciting to give spotlight portrayals of the times:

Bill Levis, making abject apologies to a zealous secretary for absence from meetings because he was commuting between here and Toledo putting together the merger of the Illinois and Owens Glass companies into an industrial giant;

Dentist Don Stocker playing his coronet to lead the singing and composing a Rotary song which endured for years;

John McAdams being surprised with an attendance of 100 members and guests, which got his efforts off the ground to organize the Lewis and Clark Bridge project which built the bridges in 1927;

Chicago's Big Bill Thompson mooring his yacht at the foot



of Piasa Street and coming to the meeting to tell of his forthcoming sea voyage to find tree-climbing frogs . . . and bring international trade to Chicago;

Herman Schippers, of Shell, fining members with gusto for lacking buttons, being late, leaving early, and any other infraction of rules, which brought on a rebellion;

Monsignor Sloan, at an inter-club golf match, shocking the clergy of Kiwanis (who had demurred at the morals of letting the losers pay for the dinners of the winners) by boldly announcing on No. 1 tee that he had \$20,000 of the Bishop's money ready to bet he'd vanquish a perennial opponent.

### The Best Program

All-time tops in programs . . . Paul B. Cousley, the most knowledgeable of Altonians; who vehemently denied ability to make a speech; describing the life of Elijah Lovejoy as a resident of Hunterstown; and the assissination which divided the citizenry and blighted Alton's opportunity as a river port at a time it was a neck-and-neck rival of St. Louis.

Bert Caldwell, dignified banker, who delighted at being called Bert instead of Mister; describing his concept of Rotary as a way of life second only to religion; and bearing enduring friendship for a secretary whose bulletin had given a functional account of a winsome miss, from who he had required some mark of identification to cash a check; and who showed him a birthmark just above her attractive left knee; at a time miniskirts were never dreamed of!

The club secretary being elected mayor, after a three month's campaign which not a sentence was uttered from the rostrum on the subject; until after the election, when the jeweler who was later to be his father-in-law presented



him with a tiepin with a diamond the size of a hazelnut; which he naively supposed was genuine. He should have known better, and did, later . . .

The war years '41-45, and '50-53, when most every member had a son in the armed forces, some as many as five; Ratchet listed eight Rotarians in the service; and club members all were on committees for the war effort; Ralph Jackson, Frank Rhine and Lafe Young staging blackout drills.

George Springman, 300 pounds of him, offering to ride a bicycle to East Alton in the July sun, if we could achieve a 100% attendance at any meeting; and actually making it to Chessen's Lane for a 95% one, bathed in sweat.

### First District Meet

Greatest effort in fellowship and cooperation in these recollections was the District Conference in '32 when Carl Hartmann was president; so amiable was he that anybody would do anything for him. It was the first such undertaking of this kind for Alton in years. Four hundred registered; sessions opened in Western Military Academy; reviewed the parade of proud cadets; moved to the Steamer St. Paul the second day for cruise to the confluences of the Missouri and Illinois . . . the meeting of three mighty rivers; Luis Machado, handsome son of the President of Cuba was the international representative, could charm the bird out of a tree, and did; finale, the governor's grand ball in the W.M.A. gymnasium. A second conference came later, when George Wilkins was Governor, but is dim in memory. Schoolman Ray Ready was then president and Wilkins later went on to become State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

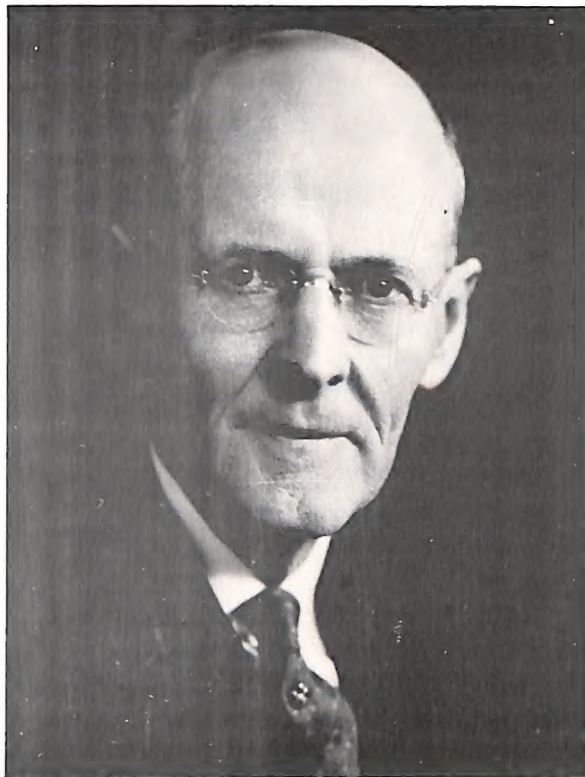
Now these are the recollections of a membership which began in 1923, and are still cherished as memoirs of an association in 48 years of helpful and congenial fellowship.

The president ordered written an account of 50 years of Rotary in Alton, and what it has meant.

In all this time, officers and members have come and gone, but of them all, the most diligent worker, the most devoted to principle of Service Above Self, and the most honored by his contemporaries, is the modest editor of the Ratchet, Louie Rupp.

These be many words, but such are the little things nice Rotary Clubs are made of.

Written and compiled by Thomas W. Butler 3-1-71



**PAUL P. HARRIS**

FOUNDER OF ROTARY  
FEBRUARY 23, 1905





## PROGRAM

C. Dana Eastman, Jr. . . . . Presiding

"Pledge of Allegiance" . . . . . Assemblage

Invocation . . . . . Rev. Dr. Cortley Burroughs

### DINNER

Welcome & Introductions . . . . . President C. Dana Eastman, Jr.

Expression from District Governor's Office. . . . . Earl E. Jukes

Introduction of Keynote Speaker . . . . . Dr. Richard D. Jones

Keynote Address. . . . . Thomas W. Butler

Presentations . . . . . Rev. Meredith J. Thomas

Benediction. . . . . Rev. John Young

Dinner Music by . . . . . James Pritchett, et. al.





## FIRST AND FIFTIETH PRESIDENTS OF ALTON ROTARY CLUB



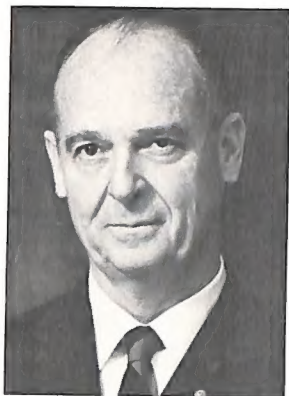
William C. "Bill" Reavis was the first President of the Alton Rotary Club. He was, while in Alton, Superintendent of Schools, in which position he so distinguished himself that he was called to larger fields. He is now connected with the University of Chicago, Department of Education, where he has won national recognition.



C. Dana Eastman, Jr., is a third generation Alton Rotary President, having been preceded by his grandfather, James T. Corbett (1925-26), and his father, C. Dana Eastman (1948-49). Dana and his Board of Directors have promoted new projects and a more active Alton Rotary Club to commemorate this fiftieth year.



## ROTARY SENDS GREETINGS



### Rotary International:

It is a pleasure to extend personal greetings to you on the important occasion of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of your club. This is truly a golden milestone in the history of Rotary.

A half century of "Service Above Self" is a record of which the Rotary Club of Alton can be justly proud. Your club has conducted significant activities in all four avenues of Rotary, and I congratulate all who have participated and carried on this great tradition of service and understanding and good will.

In addition to the commemorative festivities, your 50th anniversary provides an excellent opportunity for your club to re-evaluate its past accomplishments and set even greater goals for the future.

I call attention to this year's Rotary emphasis of "Bridge the Gaps" and I urge you to be a part of the solutions to the pressing problems that confront all mankind.

With rededication to the purpose of Rotary, I wish you continued success in all of the objectives of your fine club.

William E. Walk, Jr.  
President of Rotary International



### District Governor's Office:

Congratulations to you and the members of your Club on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Rotary in Alton.

During these years the value of the fellowship among members and service to the community cannot be measured. Rotary has added much to the life of Alton and to the lives of Rotarians.

I wish you continued success for the future.

Lamont H. Heidinger  
Governor - District 646





## FIRST OFFICERS AND CHARTER MEMBERS

In September, 1920, A.C. Bowseherdt, President of the East St. Louis Rotary Club, was appointed the District Governor's special representative to organize a Rotary Club in Alton.

The organization was completed and the club instituted on the 19th of February, 1921, with the following officers:

W. C. Reavis	President
James A. Giberson	Vice-President
Joseph G. Grossheim	Secretary
Abbott W. Sherwood	Treasurer
Leonard T. Hudson	Sergeant-at-Arms

### Directors

W. C. Reavis	Waldo J. Baer
James A. Giberson	Rollie F. Allen
Joseph G. Grossheim	J. M. Malcolm
Abbott W. Sherwood	Eben Rodgers
George S. Milnor	Edmund H. Beall

### Charter Members

L. T. Hudson	J. M. Malcolm	J. G. Grossheim
Jos. Goeken	W. C. Reavis	E. E. Campbell
Rev. F. D. Butler	Lafe Young	Dr. J. B. Hastings
F. W. Jones	E. M. Gaddis	H. B. Matthews
Geo. S. Milnor	Don Barrus	E. H. Beall
A. W. Sherwood	Eben Rodgers	R. F. Allen
W. M. Sauvage	Carl Hartmann	W. J. Baer
J. D. McAdams	J. A. Giberson	Griffin Watkins
	A. F. Ratz	



## PRESENT CLUB OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

C. Dana Eastman, Jr. ....	President
Dr. Richard D. Jones .....	Vice-President
J. Paul Gitchoff, Jr. ....	Secretary
Edward W. Keller .....	Treasurer

### Board of Directors

C. Dana Eastman, Jr.	Dr. Gail E. Myers
Dr. Richard D. Jones	C. Richard Chester
J. Paul Gitchoff, Jr.	Dr. Robert R. Anschuetz
Edward W. Keller	Henry C. Cairns
Kenneth A. Kloos	Dr. Donald S. Bottom
Louis G. Rupp	Dr. Julius Katz

Melvin A. Sparlin, Immediate Past President

### PRESENT MEMBERSHIP

Almeter, James K. ....	1968	Burroughs, Rev. Dr. Cortley H. ....	1961
Anschuetz, Dr. Robert R. ....	1950	Butler, Thomas W. ....	1923
Arst, Sidney ....	1947	Cairns, Henry C. ....	1967
Beeby, J. J. ....	1929	Chester, Richard C. ....	1968
Boals, Frank ....	1943	Clark, Russell G. ....	1943
Bordeaux, Leroy A. ....	1962	Cunningham, Edwin K. ....	1959
Bottom, Dr. Donald S. ....	1969	Drake, William J. ....	1956
Bowles, Lester B. ....	1965	Eastman, Jr., C. Dana ....	1965
Bristow, O. Martin ....	1923	Elsbach, Dr. Henry G. ....	1969
Brooks, Allen C. ....	1960	Erhart, Perry E. ....	1968
Buck, Charles M. ....	1965	Farley, Robert C. ....	1955





Foeller, Edward P. . . . . 1951  
Foster, Jr., Dennison D. . . . . 1965  
Foster, Sr., Dennison D. . . . . 1942  
Freeman, Charles R. . . . . 1950  
Fuchs, Jr., Peter E. . . . . 1963  
Gaylord, Earl J. . . . . 1950  
Giberson, Dudley F. . . . . 1933  
Gitchoff, Jr., J. Paul . . . . . 1968  
Glynn, John J. . . . . 1959  
Godwin, William I. . . . . 1937  
Goulding, Robert L. . . . . 1927  
Gray, Donald L. . . . . 1968  
Green, Rudy A. . . . . 1950  
Greenwood, John E. . . . . 1960  
Greer, Kenneth C. . . . . 1970  
Gregory, Edward J. . . . . 1962  
Hanlon, Walter J. . . . . 1946  
Hutchinson, Thomas K. . . . . 1965  
Jackson, Ralph B. . . . . 1953  
Jehle, John L. . . . . 1950  
Jones, Dr. Richard D. . . . . 1967  
Jourdain, Robert J. . . . . 1954  
Katz, Dr. Julius . . . . . 1964  
Keeney, Bernard T. . . . . 1954  
Keller, Edward W. . . . . 1965  
Kloos, Kenneth A. . . . . 1952  
Koppenhaver, Donald R. . . . . 1966  
Kratschmer, Gene F. . . . . 1956  
Kresteff, Dr. Assen D. . . . . 1963  
Lauschke, Jr., Paul R. . . . . 1963  
Long, Bugene E. . . . . 1969  
Luken, Ralph W. . . . . 1947  
McBrien, Nelson K. . . . . 1964  
McCorry, Daniel C. . . . . 1970  
Maggoss, Nick G. . . . . 1967  
Mahon, Arthur J. . . . . 1938

Maley, Dr. Paul A. . . . . 1954  
Maucker, Robert B. . . . . 1965  
Meyer, Edward H. . . . . 1936  
Mondhink, Harry R. . . . . 1959  
Moore, Dr. Gordon F. . . . . 1948  
Morgan, Byron L. . . . . 1961  
Myers, Dr. Gail E. . . . . 1967  
Nevlin, Harry A. . . . . 1950  
Norman, Charles J. . . . . 1965  
Peters, Robert A. . . . . 1961  
Pfeiffenberger, Dr. Mather. . . . . 1953  
Pivoda, Jr., Fayette W. . . . . 1968  
Platt, Dr. Daniel W. . . . . 1966  
Ready, Raymond . . . . . 1938  
Robertson, Dr. Forbes S. . . . . 1960  
Rochleau, Marvin. . . . . 1968  
Rupp, Louis G. . . . . 1949  
Ruyle, Dwight E. . . . . 1965  
Schulmeister, Dr. Melvin E. . . . . 1965  
Slayton, Willis F. . . . . 1934  
Smith, O. Derrell. . . . . 1954  
Sowders, Jr., Rudy C. . . . . 1969  
Sparlin, Melvin A. . . . . 1960  
Stevenson, George F. . . . . 1963  
Streeper, III, I.H. . . . . 1947  
Sommers, Les . . . . . 1971  
Stimson, Andrew W. . . . . 1971  
Taylor, Garth H. . . . . 1957  
Thomas, Rev. Meredith J. . . . . 1970  
Thompson, Leo E. . . . . 1969  
Vine, Ben C. . . . . 1953  
Walters, Robert J. . . . . 1965  
Wardein, Joseph V. . . . . 1943  
Wells, Harold A. . . . . 1965  
Wienschienk, Isadore . . . . . 1940  
Yancey, Robert L. . . . . 1967  
Young, Rev. John M. . . . . 1956



## YEAR BY YEAR PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES

Feb. 1921— William C. Reavis . . . . . President Joseph G. Grossheim . . . . . Secretary	1934-35 — John L. Hurst . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary
1921-22 — William C. Reavis and R. F. Allen . . . . . President Joseph G. Grossheim . . . . . Secretary	1935-36 — Dr. Maurice R. Williamson . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary
1922-23 — Ralph L. Jackson . . . . . President Rev. Fred D. Butler . . . . . Secretary	1936-37 — H. J. Stephens . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary
1923-24 — W. T. Loudon . . . . . President J. A. Giberson . . . . . Secretary	1937-38 — Dudley F. Giberson . . . . . President Rev. Wallace W. Robbins . . . . . Secretary
1924-25 — W. R. Curtis . . . . . President W. G. Swope . . . . . Secretary	1938-39 — Dr. D. D. Monroe . . . . . President Carl A. Parrish . . . . . Secretary
1925-26 — J. T. Corbett . . . . . President Tom Butler . . . . . Secretary	1939-40 — George B. Springman . . . . . President C. L. Cunningham . . . . . Secretary
1926-27 — John D. McAdams . . . . . President Tom Butler . . . . . Secretary	1940-41 — Ed. W. Brown . . . . . President C. L. Cunningham . . . . . Secretary
1927-28 — Harold Powell . . . . . President John Thies . . . . . Secretary	1941-42 — H. Rand Rodgers . . . . . President Ed. W. Brown . . . . . Secretary
1928-29 — Dr. H. E. Middleton . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary	1942-43 — Thomas W. Butler . . . . . President Dudley F. Giberson . . . . . Secretary
1929-30 — C. W. Warrinner . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary	1943-44 — George I. Rohrbough . . . . . President Dudley F. Giberson and Joseph A. Hornsey . . . . . Secretaries
1930-31 — E. H. Schippers . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary	1944-45 — Walter K. Stobbs . . . . . President Parmer L. Ewing . . . . . Secretary
1931-32 — C. A. Hartmann . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary	1945-46 — Clayton J. Scholsser . . . . . President H. Edward Meyer . . . . . Secretary
1932-33 — Dr. Mather Pfeiffenberger . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary	1946-47 — Parmer L. Ewing . . . . . President C. L. Persing . . . . . Secretary
1933-34 — H. A. Stiles . . . . . President A. H. Eyler . . . . . Secretary	1947-48 — H. Edward Meyer . . . . . President Edward L. Hull . . . . . Secretary





1948-49 — C. Dana Eastman Sr. . . . . President  
Edwin L. Hull . . . . . Secretary

1949-50 — Arthur J. Mahon . . . . . President  
Leon O. Meyer & Bert J. Wuellner . . . . . Secretary

1950-51 — Edward E. Powers . . . . . President  
Leon O. Meyer . . . . . Secretary

1951-52 — Bert J. Wuellner . . . . . President  
Dr. Robert R. Anschuetz . . . . . Secretary

1952-53 — Leon O. Meyer . . . . . President  
Robert M. Stillwell . . . . . Secretary

1953-54 — J. Milton Cassella . . . . . President  
Robert M. Stillwell . . . . . Secretary

1954-55 — Edward P. Foeller . . . . . President  
Joseph A. Hornsey . . . . . Secretary

1955-56 — Raymond Ready . . . . . President  
Joseph A. Hornsey . . . . . Secretary

1956-57 — Ben C. Vine . . . . . President  
James J. Lewis . . . . . Secretary

1957-58 — Dr. Robert R. Anschuetz . . . . . President  
Sidney S. Arst . . . . . Secretary

1958-59 — Herbert R. Hellrung . . . . . President  
Sidney S. Arst . . . . . Secretary

1959-60 — James J. Lewis . . . . . President  
Bernard T. Keeney . . . . . Secretary

1960-61 — John L. Jehle . . . . . President  
George L. Springman . . . . . Secretary

1961-62 — Bernard T. Keeney . . . . . President  
George L. Springman . . . . . Secretary

1962-63 — Gene F. Kratschmer . . . . . President  
Rev. Dr. Cortley H. Burroughs . . . . . Secretary

1963-64 — Herman T. Bunyan . . . . . President  
Rev. Dr. Cortley H. Burroughs . . . . . Secretary

1963-64 — Dr. Forbes S. Robertson . . . . . President  
Dr. Paul A. Maley . . . . . Secretary

1964-65 — Rev. Dr. Cortley H. Burroughs . . . . . President  
Dr. Paul A. Maley . . . . . Secretary

1965-66 — Dr. John J. Glynn . . . . . President  
Dr. Forbes S. Robertson . . . . . Secretary

1966-67 — Dr. Paul A. Maley . . . . . President  
LeRoy A. Bordeayx . . . . . Secretary

1967-68 — Paul R. Lauschke Jr. . . . . President  
Melvin A. Sparlin . . . . . Secretary

1968-69 — LeRoy A. Bordeaux . . . . . President  
Dr. Richard D. Jones . . . . . Secretary

1969-70 — Melvin A. Sparlin . . . . . President  
Dr. Richard D. Jones . . . . . Secretary

1970-71 — C. Dana Eastman Jr. . . . . President  
J. Paul Gitchoff Jr. . . . . Secretary



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ALTON ROTARY CLUB  
MEETS MONDAY 6:00